

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 249

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pride in recognizing significant milestones in the history of those health care institutions that have had a profound impact on the people of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, one such esteemed institution is Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center in Knoxville, which traces its beginnings to May 29, 1919, when a group of physicians received a charter from the State of Tennessee for a new hospital to be built on the site of the Civil War battle of Fort Sanders, and

WHEREAS, John H. Mauney was named first superintendent of Fort Sanders Hospital, and the hospital established a School of Nursing in December 1919 as construction neared completion; and

WHEREAS, construction of the hospital was completed on February 20, 1920, and the hospital opened its doors to care for patients on February 23, 1920; and

WHEREAS, during its early years, Fort Sanders Hospital brought many medical "firsts" to Knoxville, including the city's first ambulance service, first incubator for premature babies, and first private hospital use of penicillin, which was then considered a new "wonder drug"; and

WHEREAS, hospital expansions continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s; in 1954, the hospital owners agreed that operations should pass to a nonprofit church group, the Knoxville Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church U.S.; and

WHEREAS, subsequently, the hospital's name was changed to Fort Sanders Presbyterian Hospital, and Thomas W. Newland was appointed to serve as administrator, a position he would hold for more than twenty years; and

WHEREAS, facility expansion continued with the opening of a new west wing for the hospital in 1960. That same year, Fort Sanders Presbyterian Hospital specially recognized Elizabeth Killeffer, director of nursing, who joined Fort Sanders in 1920 and retired after forty years of dedicated service; and

WHEREAS, a fiftieth anniversary celebration was held in 1970 to commemorate the hospital's continued growth, and in 1978, the hospital opened the Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center, named in honor of the Oscar-winning actress, who grew up in Knoxville and survived three devastating strokes; and

WHEREAS, Miss Neal called the new center "A House for Heroes," which provided rehabilitation services for patients who experienced strokes, spinal cord injuries, or brain injuries; and

WHEREAS, Fort Sanders Presbyterian Hospital opened the first hospice program in Tennessee and was the first private hospital in Tennessee to install a linear accelerator for use in its expanding cancer treatment program; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, the hospital ended its affiliation with the Presbyterian Church and became known as Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center; during the next two decades, it responded to changes in the healthcare environment by affiliating with other organizations to develop a coordinated system of care; and

WHEREAS, the hospital became the flagship member of Fort Sanders Health System, a not-for-profit organization that included Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville, several community hospitals in surrounding counties, a medical mall at Fort Sanders West, and local organizations offering behavioral services; and

WHEREAS, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center employees led the way in community fundraising for the construction of Thompson Cancer Survival Center, which offers outpatient cancer services adjacent to the hospital and has expanded to include multiple locations in East Tennessee; and,

WHEREAS, in 1996, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center became the largest member hospital of Covenant Health, a not-for-profit organization formed by Fort Sanders Health System and MMC HealthCare System in Oak Ridge with a mission of improving the quality of life in the region through better health; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, Fort Sanders School of Nursing announced affiliation with Tennessee Wesleyan College (now Tennessee Wesleyan University) to offer baccalaureate-level nursing education and became Fort Sanders Nursing Department at Tennessee Wesleyan University; and

WHEREAS, in the early 2000s, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center underwent a \$70 million development project and expanded as a regional referral center in areas such as maternity services, including high-risk pregnancies; cardiac care, including advanced technology for diagnosis and treatment of heart disease; minimally invasive surgery, including robotic surgery and innovations in spine surgery; and advanced treatments for cancer, including Gamma Knife Technology; and

WHEREAS, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center has also led area-wide initiatives for rapid treatment of severe heart attacks, exceeding national goals for "door-to-balloon" treatment times; and

WHEREAS, the medical center is certified as a Comprehensive Stroke Center, signifying the hospital's specially trained staff and round-the-clock treatment capabilities, along with advanced technology and expertise to treat complex strokes, and serves as the hub of Covenant Health's stroke hospital network; and

WHEREAS, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center is on the leading edge of stroke care with clinical trials that are not available elsewhere and introduced East Tennessee's first "tele-stroke" robot, which allows stroke patients at community hospitals to receive consults from neurologists via video screen; and

WHEREAS, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center has been honored for quality and excellent patient care throughout its history, receiving recognition from healthcare organizations such as VHA, IBM Watson, Truven Analytics, the Tennessee Hospital Association, and others and from publications such as *U.S. News and World Report* and *Becker's Hospital Review*; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center had 17,114 hospital admissions, welcomed 2,648 new babies, performed 10,233 inpatient and outpatient surgeries, had 50,570 emergency department registrations, and launched a \$115 million expansion of emergency and critical care areas so the medical center can continue to serve the growing healthcare needs of the region and beyond; and

WHEREAS, for 100 years, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center has been a leader in health care and a major employer and contributor to East Tennessee's economic growth and has cared for people in the region and beyond through medical services, charity care, contributions to community organizations, and support of health professions education, making a significant positive impact on the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we commemorate the 100th anniversary of Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center, commend its 100 years of excellence in health care, and extend our best wishes for many more years of continued success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.